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If you'd like us to take more responsibility for gathering the evidence (supporting documents) we need to make a decision on your claim, you can file a standard disability claim. Find out how to submit a standard claim. And learn what evidence we'll gather for you.

What do I need to do to submit a standard disability claim?

Here's what you'll need to do:

- File a claim for disability compensation ([find out how to file your claim \(https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim\)](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim)), **and**
- Let us know about related records not held by a federal agency, and give us any information we may need in order to get them, **and**
- Go to any medical exams that we schedule, if we decide these exams are needed to make a decision on your claim

Note: It's your responsibility to make sure we get all requested records that aren't at a federal agency or office. If a person or agency asks for money for the evidence, refuses to give us evidence, or can't get the evidence, we'll ask you to try to get it for us. We won't pay for any fees or postage to get your records from private sources.

What kinds of records might VA need that aren't held by a federal agency?

We need any records related to your claim from sources like these:

- State or local governments
- Any private (non-VA) doctors who've treated you
- Any private (non-VA) hospitals or other health facilities where you've been treated
- Your current or former employers

What evidence will VA gather when I file a standard disability claim?

We'll get related records from these government sources:

- Any federal agency (including the military)
- VA medical centers (including private facilities where we've authorized treatment)
- The Social Security Administration

With your permission, we'll also make every reasonable effort to request relevant records that you authorize us to get that aren't at a federal facility (including records from non-VA doctors and hospitals).

Note: We may provide a medical exam for you, or get a doctor's opinion if we need it to make a decision on your claim.

Example: A Veteran filed a disability claim that included prior treatment from a private doctor and a prior Social Security disability award. In this case, we were responsible for getting the Social Security records. We also

helped to get the private doctor's records, but the Veteran was responsible for making sure we got those.

What should the evidence show to support my disability claim?

This depends on the type of claim you're filing.

[Check what evidence is needed for different types of claims
\(https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed\).](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/)

How do I file a standard claim?

You can file a standard claim online, by mail, in person, by fax, or with the help of a trained professional.

[Find out how to file a standard claim for disability compensation
\(https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim\).](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/)

Should I submit an intent to file?

If you're not ready to file your claim yet, you may want to submit an intent to file. This sets a potential start date (or effective date) for your benefits, so you may be able to get retroactive payments. These are back payments for the time between when you submitted your intent to file and when we approved your claim.

[Find out how to submit an intent to file
\(https://www.va.gov/resources/your-intent-to-file-a-va-claim\).](https://www.va.gov/resources/your-intent-to-file-a-va-claim/)

Does it take longer to get a decision from VA on a standard claim than a fully developed claim?

Yes. The process is slower for getting a decision on a standard disability claim. This is because we need time to gather evidence for your claim.

If you'd like to get a decision on your claim faster, you can submit a fully developed claim. For this type of claim, you gather all of the evidence—or as much as you can get easily—and submit it at the same time as your claim.

[Learn more about submitting a fully developed disability claim \(https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/fully-developed-claims\)](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed/fully-developed-claims)

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